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ABSTRACT

This theme issue covers "High School Programming" and approaches to meeting the needs of gifted high school students in Texas. The first article is "Thematic Interdisciplinary Curricula for Secondary Gifted Students in English and Social Studies" (Joel E. McIntosh and April W. Meacham). This approach is contrasted with the traditional curriculum model and the integrated curriculum model and implementation guidelines are offered. The second article is "Coming to America: The Ellis Island Experience" (Pam Martin). This describes a simulation experience and lists steps in designing a simulation. Next, Coila Morrow and Judy Duncan ("An Interdisciplinary Secondary Program for Gifted/Talented Students in a Small District") describe their use of a thematic curriculum model for 40 high school students. The next article, by an 11th grade student, Jeb Williamson, is titled "Awakening the Potential in Gifted Students." It offers a student viewpoint of one gifted and talented program and stresses the value of student involvement in all aspects of curriculum development. Next, Sandra R. Gifford offers guidelines for "Organizing Dual Enrollment Options for Gifted Education." The final article, by Evelyn Levsky Hiatt and Jeanette Covington, is "Q & A High School Programming." It addresses such areas as grading, differences between honors and gifted classes, high school seminar programs, mentors, and furloughs from the program. (References accompany most of the articles.) (DB)

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update
on gifted education

VOL. 2, NO. 1, SPRING 1992

High School Programming

Developing programs that meet the needs of gifted secondary school students pose exciting challenges for school district personnel. Many of the students have already participated in programs that offered ample opportunities to practice research and study skills, critical thinking, and problem solving. Other students will just be embarking on program services and will need support in these areas. Districts should explore a variety of options to meet the needs of their students. They should use the opportunity presented by students of advanced ability and interest to be innovative and to offer an array of services that focus on different subjects, prototypes, and practices.

This issue suggests several different approaches to meeting the needs of gifted students. They all meet State Board of Education guidelines and they all present a hint of the exciting possibilities that are available. Should you have questions regarding any of these alternatives, please feel free to call the Division of Gifted/Talented Education at 512-463-9455 or contact the individual authors—they will be happy to work with you in meeting the needs of the students in your district.

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This publication was developed by Texas Education Agency staff members in the Office of the Executive Deputy Commissioner for Programs and Instruction.

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Thematic, Interdisciplinary Curricula
FOR SECONDARY GIFTED STUDENTS IN ENGLISH AND SOCIAL STUDIES

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Prufrock Journal
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The foundation of any gifted and talented program must be a quality, differentiated curriculum. Sandra Kaplan (1979), a leader in the field of gifted education, outlines three areas for special emphasis when building curriculum for the gifted learner: content structuring, thinking skills, and use of products in the classroom. Of these, content structuring and, when necessary, restructuring can be the most challenging for secondary teachers of English and social studies. Often bound to tradition of content structuring primarily tied to the sequence of chapters in a textbook, English and social studies teachers face an exciting challenge when presented the opportunity to restructure their content for gifted students.

An interdisciplinary, thematic curriculum, as outlined by Kaplan (1979), is based upon the study of broad themes such as "structures," "explorations," or "change." The content of such a curriculum allows students to explore how these broad themes emerge in and across multiple disciplines of study. Kaplan suggests that structuring the content of a course of study around broad, interdisciplinary themes offers gifted and talented students a curriculum model highly appropriate for their learning needs. The model invites students to explore new connections and identify unconsidered relationships. The interdisciplinary model requires that students build new knowledge and solve new problems—the emphasis is placed not on the absorption of a body of information, but on finding new and innovative ways of viewing and creating knowledge.

This model is very different from a more traditional curriculum model. Under a traditional curriculum, reflected in Figure 1, knowledge is arranged within disciplines and is organized around concrete subject matter. For example, students might study the short story or naturalist literature in English, or they might study the Civil War or the European Middle Ages in history.

Students, under this model, see few connections among disciplines. Math, science, history, and English are related only in that instruction of each concludes with the ringing of a bell. Furthermore, the focus of this model is information delivery and skill mastery. Students are expected to master a body of skills and knowledge specific to each discipline. In

Figure 1

Content Structured Under a Traditional Curriculum Model

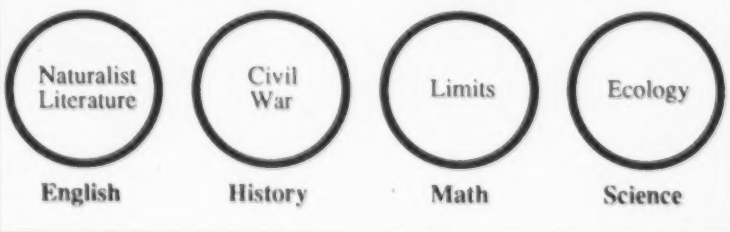
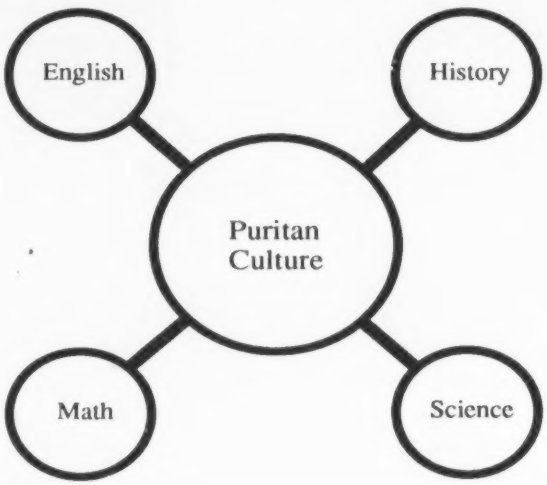


Figure 2

Content Structured Under An Integrated Curriculum Model



English, an objective might focus on helping the students identify important details in a reading. Once this skill is mastered, students move on to a new objective. While this type of skill mastery is important for any curriculum model, a system that focuses on it at the exclusion of concept exploration, creation of new knowledge, and the search for innovative applications of concepts is not preparing students for the challenges of the future (Toffler, 1974).

Another popular model for structuring content is the integrated curriculum model shown in Figure 2. Humanities programs often use this model to structure content. In the integrated program, knowledge is *not* arranged within separate disciplines but is still organized around concrete subject matter. For example, a unit in a humanities class might explore a concrete topic such as the European Renaissance. Students would study the art, plays, and political history of the Renaissance. In another unit, the class might study the Puritans. Students would study the daily life, theology, and literature of the Puritans.

Under this model, students are afforded opportunities to explore the connections among disciplines. They explore the interdependence that is inherent among science, art, politics, and theology. From this curricular model, a more realistic picture of the human drama develops.

Yet, because the object of study under this model is essentially concrete in nature (e.g., Renaissance or Puritans), opportunities for concept inquiry, creation of new insight, and the search for original applications of concepts are impeded. Students may explore the interconnections among integrated, but concrete, topics without having the opportunity to explore these connections as they relate to the present and future or as they relate to other or new knowledge within the discipline.

Under an interdisciplinary curriculum model, such as the one in Figure 3, content is organized around broad-based concepts, themes, and problems (Kaplan, 1979). For example, a unit might focus on the theme of "change." Students in different disciplines might study the way "personal, historical, and environmental changes produce conflict."

Such themes are explored in different ways in different disciplines. An English class might look at personal change and the forms of conflict which ensue. In a British literature class, *Macbeth* might be explored as a case study focusing on the ways change in a man's ambition produces both internal and external conflict. In the history class, students might study historical change as a catalyst for international conflict. Students could examine the war in the Persian Gulf and the ways this conflict was related to President Bush's desire for a "new or changed world order."

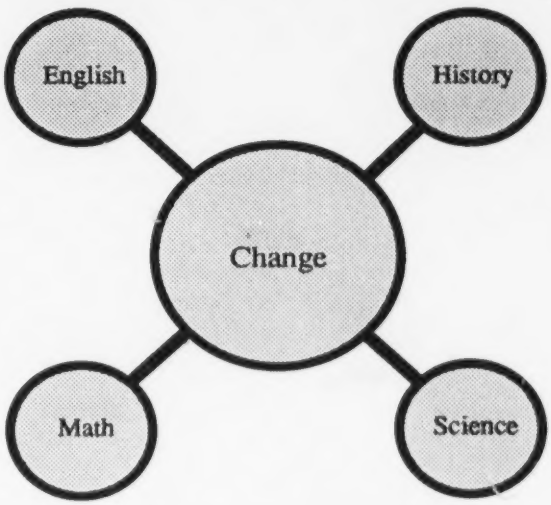
It is never forgotten, however, that throughout a unit focused on change, teachers of the various disciplines help students see the relationships among the disciplines. In fact, many of the student projects are designed so that students explore the ways themes present themselves in many disciplines. For instance, during a project in an English class, students might investigate the ways conflicting political and social values during the 1960s produced change in the form and substance of the literature of that period.

Important characteristics of the interdisciplinary curriculum model are the broad-based concepts, themes, or problems which are used to "connect" the various disciplines of study. These connectors act as a glue, holding together gifted students' total school program. Students see the interrelations at work among the various disciplines because they are studying different aspects of the same thematic concept within their various classes. They develop an understanding of the many thematic threads which traverse not only the body of knowledge in one discipline, but across the many disciplines.

A thematic, interdisciplinary curriculum includes four structural levels: the theme, the generalization, key words, and subtopics. Early in the development of thematic curricula, teachers choose an appropriate theme. A theme should allow the learner to explore the interrelatedness of many disciplines. Kaplan (1979) outlines the characteristics of appropriate themes: they are broad-based and universal, they should be applicable to multiple disciplines, they should allow for in-depth exploration, and they are on-going. Examples of themes used in various Texas districts include: change, discoveries, explorations, frontiers, independence, interdependence, influences, structures, and survival.

Figure 3

Content Structured Under A Thematic, Interdisciplinary Curriculum Model



Several factors should be considered when choosing a theme (Boyd, 1981). It should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the district and of personal interest and value to both teachers and students. For example, the theme of change might be an excellent theme for study in a district with the objective of creating students who value and are involved in positive action.

Resources for teaching the theme should be easily accessible and the content derived from the theme should be relevant to students' lives. An appropriate theme allows students the opportunity to learn and develop concepts, and it is flexible enough to allow for independent study. Finally, the theme should be suitable for the age level with which it will be used, and the amount of time available for the exploration of the theme should be given careful consideration.

The next step in developing thematic curricula is the writing of a generalization from which the content for the unit will be organized. While generalizations are

more specific than themes, they still should be broad enough to use across a variety of disciplines (Samara & Curry, 1990). The generalization is a statement that contains both a theme and a set of key words that help define the focus of study.

For example, in the generalization for the theme of *Change*, "personal, historical, and environmental changes produce conflict," the words "personal," "historical," "environmental," and "conflict" act as key words. An example of a generalization for the theme of *Traditions* is "traditions are influenced by people, places, and beliefs." In this generalization, "influences," "people," "places," and "beliefs" are key words. For the theme of *Patterns*, a generalization such as "patterns serve many functions and purposes" could be used. "Functions" and "purposes" would be key words in this generalization.

Once a theme, generalization, and key words have been identified, disciplines that will be included in the thematic study should be determined. Essentially, this means that certain themes and generalizations may lend themselves more readily to study within certain disciplines. The "change" generalization above lends itself to exploration in social studies, English, and biology. The "patterns" generalization offers more for the mathematics, physics, and English classroom. Once disciplines have been chosen, subtopics (or the typical units of study) may then be defined (Samara & Curry, 1990).

...textbooks no longer act as the primary structure for a course of study as in many traditional curriculum models; rather, textbooks act as one of many resources to be used to ensure that students may freely explore an interdisciplinary unit.

Next, teachers developing units of study choose the content students will use to delve into their thematic units. Teachers involved in the development of the units of study are given much freedom to reorganize and restructure content. Here, textbooks no longer act as the primary structure for a course of study as in many traditional curriculum models; rather, textbooks act as one of many resources to be used to ensure that students may freely explore an interdisciplinary unit.

Once content is delineated, teachers outline the thinking, research, and basic skills students will be expected to develop or master during the unit. Next, student projects (e.g., video presentations, poetry, skits, essays) are defined.

After the unit's content, skills, and projects have been outlined, appropriate evaluation instruments can be created. Finally, teachers develop specific classroom activities which guide students to understand the unit's content, master its skills, and achieve its expectations.

The thematic, interdisciplinary curriculum model offers educators a flexible structure within which to create exciting units that help students make sense of the interdisciplinary world around them. It also offers students and educators a new way of viewing disciplines of study.

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Coming to America:
THE ELLIS ISLAND EXPERIENCE

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A primary goal in a class for gifted students is to provide experiences that increase learning and motivation and allow opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving. Essential to the experiences is the relevancy dimension, the necessity of packaging the learning in a real life context. Designing a lesson that offers all this and nurtures a cooperative atmosphere stretches the professional capabilities and creative energies of those of us who teach the gifted.

A complex area of lesson design involves the integration of the cognitive and affective domains, assisting students not only toward an understanding of the material to be learned but also toward an understanding of the attitudes and beliefs that are often integral to the learning. For example, how can students totally understand the value of the Emancipation Proclamation if they do not understand the attitudes or beliefs of nineteenth century Americans, black and white? Or how can students learn to solve real life problems in rational ways if they are not allowed to practice solving real life problems in a controlled, non-threatening environment? Or how can we as educators of the gifted expect our students to become effective leaders and decision makers if we do not put them in leadership positions and give them dilemmas to ponder and act upon? Although vitally important to a student's educational future, teaching only to the cognitive domain provides the student with an incomplete picture of what he knows; it is the affective domain that gives the cognitive domain its meaning and the student the intrinsic motivation to grow in his learning.

In the spring of 1991, my colleague and I, both teachers of high school gifted students in the Allen Independent School District, were faced with the dilemma of integrating the study of ethnocentricity, prejudice, and bias in their historical contexts with the personal experiences of our students. We realized early in the planning process that most of our students had never experienced any of these feelings first-hand, so how were they going to understand them in the historical sense? The solution was to design an experience for them that would put them face to face with ethnocentricity, prejudice, and bias.

"Coming to America: The Ellis Island Experience" was a simulation of the immigration experience. It involved ninety-two students in grades nine through twelve who are currently enrolled in the program for gifted and talented students at Allen High School. Students in grades nine and ten role-played the immigrants who came to America in 1923, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. These immigrants were generally discriminated against because of their darker complexions. The students carefully researched the cultures they were to represent, learning about the language, economy,

religion, food, and geography; they also learned the reasons why these immigrants came to America. The objectives of the simulation for these students included a first-hand experience with unfounded prejudice and bias.

The junior and senior students role-played the U.S. Immigration Service officials who processed the immigrants at Ellis Island in 1923. They were not told initially the true objective of the simulation (to experience the results of ethnocentricity); they were told that their role was to frustrate the younger students throughout the process. The immigration part of the simulation was the most complex since it involved establishing a process that was both realistic and historically accurate. After doing a month's worth of research, a basic plan was developed. The basic plan involved three stages.

Although vitally important to a student's educational future, teaching only to the cognitive domain provides the student with an incomplete picture of what he knows; it is the affective domain that gives the cognitive domain its meaning and the student the intrinsic motivation to grow in his learning.

Stage I

The "officials" set up a classroom as Dock 21 of the White Star Line Steamship Company who owned the R. M. S. Titanic and her sister ship the R. M. S. Olympic. Since the Titanic had gone down in 1912, they chose to "sail" the immigrants on the Olympic. The immigrants were tagged with signs indicating their countries of origin as officials checked their passports (which the students had made), then sold them steamship tickets. Only Germans and Swedes were allowed to buy first class tickets and sit in chairs; all others could buy only third class tickets and were required to sit on the floor. A twelve foot square area was provided for the fifty-one immigrants to simulate the crowded conditions in third class. Officials also checked baggage (immigrants were told to bring bundles, baskets, or boxes since most immigrants came with only bare necessities), boarded the immigrants and talked them through a typical voyage, one that lasted twelve or fifteen days in rough North Atlantic waters. To end the "voyage," one student dressed up like the Statue of Liberty who "passed by" the ship as it came into the port of New York.

Stage II

When the students disembarked, they were given what were called "manifest tags" which indicated a scenario they would follow in the immigration process. Fifty-one different scenarios were written to make sure each immigrant would experience a respectable amount of frustration. After waiting in a "Security Holding Area," immigrants were "ferried" in groups of ten to Ellis Island—Main Building (actually the Allen High School Library). The library had been transformed the day before into the registry room of Ellis Island, along with a medical examination room, a detention center, and deportation center.

When immigrants were allowed into the registry room, they were given a form to fill out; some students were given forms in another language to simulate the language barrier. These pre-selected students eventually were sent to Special Inquiry—U.S. Public Welfare for literacy testing; if they failed, they were sent to Public Welfare detention and given a five-minute English lesson. Other immigrants were stopped by doctors who performed the Six-Second Medical Examination, marking their clothing with chalk according to suspected health problems—E for eye disease, H for heart conditions, C for contagious diseases, and X for insanity. After a medical exam, some were cleared to return to the immigration process, oth-

ers were detained in quarantine or rehabilitation. All of these experiences were historically accurate.

Other students had their names anglicized by immigration officials (which caused problems later in the process); some faced detention for political reform (suspected anarchists and communists) or social reform (vagrants and criminals); some were selected to have their papers confiscated (WOP) which led to deportation. Some were detained for social, political, or medical reasons and later deported because they could not be reformed or cured. Each of the fifty-one immigrants was allowed to experience at least one detention or deportation to help him/her understand the frustration and disappointment many immigrants felt when they had to return home after making a fifteen day voyage.

Stage III

When the immigrants finished immigration (which included Public Health and Public Welfare), they were sent for job interviews, housing interviews, customs (where baggage was searched and articles confiscated), and finally passport control, the bank to exchange money, and the ticket counter for the New York Central Railroad (if they were housed in New York) or the New York Ferry Service (if they were housed in New Jersey). Then after the immigrants were administered the Oath of Allegiance to become U.S. citizens, the immigrants were fed an American lunch at long tables which seated all fifty-one of them and looked remarkably like the dining room at Ellis Island.

When the simulation was over, the discussions centered on the feelings of each group—frustration, fatigue, power or loss of power, and control or the loss of control. The younger students learned to appreciate the struggles many immigrants went through to become Americans. The older students realized that counting a culture inferior can lead to a feeling of superiority which then makes it easy to despise, mistreat, and oppress it—the results of ethnocentricity.

The simulation took hundreds of hours to research and create. We made over sixty signs for the three stages of the simulation and created countless forms (immigration, medical, customs, VISAs). Some students were assigned to handle public relations; they made dozens of calls to the local media and sent invitations to teachers and administrators to come and witness the simulation. In the final analysis, it was a huge success. As teachers, we realized that if more students were allowed to experience ethnocentricity in a controlled environment, we could increase students' world awareness and help them appreciate the contributions many cultures have made to the world community; more importantly we could help them appreciate the cultural diversity that makes us what we are as Americans.

The older students realized that counting a culture inferior can lead to a feeling of superiority which then makes it easy to despise, mistreat, and oppress it—the results of ethnocentricity.

Steps in Designing a Simulation

I. Decide on a simulation that blends with your theme.

II. Determine far in advance what the affective experience is to be; what do you want the students to feel during the simulation?

III. Write your objectives so that the students will know what is expected of them (or was expected of them if you take the discovery approach to learning with the simulation).

IV. Outline the simulation from beginning to end taking into consideration that you are framing a drama in which the students will act. Consider the following:

A. How much time do you want to allow?

B. What props or costumes will be needed?

C. What roles will be required?

D. What do the students need to know before they play the role?

E. What guidelines will be required to protect the students from an inappropriate emotional experience?

F. What outcomes are possible?

G. How much time is required for debriefing (the most important part of the simulation)?

V. Prepare the students for the experience by assigning them to research actual situations which are parallel to the simulation experience.

VI. Allow the students to choose roles and to "flesh out" their characters. Keep reminding them that they will be required to stay in character throughout the simulation. This requirement not only makes the simulation consistently realistic but it also provides an emotional buffer between the emotions of the character and the emotions of the students.

VII. On the day of the simulation have all props ready. Set a schedule for the students to follow. Constantly monitor the activities to see that all students are staying in their characters. Be prepared to take a student aside if he seems to be taking the experience too seriously. A teacher's role on the day of the simulation is more trouble-shooting than directing. The students should be prepared well enough that the simulation will direct itself. Take notes of what works and what does not work. No matter how well you and the students have planned the activity, something will go wrong.

VIII. At the conclusion of the simulation, begin the debriefing. The debriefing should take several forms. Begin with an open discussion of how students are feeling. If the experience has been a long one (several hours), you might allow the students a chance to relax and talk among themselves before you enter the discussion. Follow the oral debrief with a writing assignment. Ask them to write from the point of view of the character they portrayed and ask them to react to the situations they encountered. Complete your debriefing with an evaluation of the experience from the technical side: what worked and what did not work; what could be changed to make the experience better; what additions would you make to the simulation to make it more realistic?

IX. Follow-up the debriefing with a discussion of how the simulation fits into the broader theme of study and why it was important to participate in such an experience.

X. Final notes of caution.

A. Plan to spend many hours preparing for the simulation. By nature simulations are complex and re-

quire a great deal of energy and time on the part of the teacher to be a success.

B. Involve the students in the planning of the simulation. Since it is a very creative experience, they will enjoy planning and making the props.

C. Be prepared to spend hours with the students in the preparation of their roles; they must be well-rehearsed.

D. Make sure that you as a teacher are prepared for all the possible emotional responses you will get from the students. Be prepared to intervene if the feelings become too real.

E. For long simulations consider giving students breaks; sustaining a role for hours is exhausting. Provide snacks to prevent fatigue (unless this is a feeling you are trying to simulate).

F. The longer the simulation, the longer the debriefing will take. Hours of a simulation will translate into days of debriefing. Don't quit before the students are ready; leaving emotional experiences unaddressed will leave the students with an incomplete learning experience.

G. Reassure students that feelings and emotions they felt were appropriate for the real life experience; students need to know that the frustration, the power surge, the disappointment, or whatever emotion they felt, was the same emotion felt by real people in the real situation. Sharing journals or personal accounts of these real people will validate the students' experiences.

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An Interdisciplinary Secondary Program
FOR GIFTED/TALENTED STUDENTS IN A SMALL DISTRICT

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"Cherish your visions and your dreams as they are the children of your soul--the blueprints of your ultimate achievements."

--Napoleon Hill

There are times when visions are turned into action and where innovation and change become reality. Developing a program for gifted students in Frenship Independent School District (FISD, a district near Lubbock, Texas) has been truly a remarkable experience for all involved. I was given the assignment of inventing a gifted/talented program for ninth through twelfth grade that meets the zero hour in high school each day, and that incorporated five teachers, one from each discipline, to instruct approximately 40 students. A myriad of experts in gifted education had often exclaimed, "No program can work in high school that is not related to one specific discipline!" But I decided to take a risk, to be persistent, act courageously, treat mistakes as learning opportunities, underpromise and overdeliver, and let others add to the vision. Furthermore, I wanted the teachers to become the facilitators and the students, the teachers/learners. My theory was loosely based on Dr. Sandra Kaplan's (1979) thematic curriculum model as well as my own research into the possibility of a course that concentrates on creativity, with content injected in the scaffolding framework. If I could take teachers through the process, why not students—students involved in writing their own curriculum, students planning their own program, students decision-making and problem-solving their way through education to reach autonomous learning. There were a lot of "What If's." Was I merely dreaming or could the vision work? Enter—five incredible individuals with the ability to visualize, take risks, and elaborate on new ideas. The team of John Franklin, history; Gwen Cullimore, science; Susan Donini, art; Judy Duncan, English; and Karen McLarty, Math; became a vision community ready to journey into uncharted waters. We paddled fast and some days almost capsized. We tenaciously hung on through the rapids and finally realized that we could make it happen by paddling in the same direction together, continually listening to one another, and putting the students and the program first. The anchor was the Director of Instructional Services, Wyman Richey, who provided constant encouragement and ran along the bank telling us we could make it and to simply, "Go For It!"

If I could take teachers through the process, why not students—students involved in writing their own curriculum, students planning their own program, students decision-making and problem-solving their way through education to reach autonomous learning. There were a lot of "What If's." Was I merely dreaming or could the vision work?

None of the teachers had any previous training in thematic curriculum but were exemplary leaders in their fields, which

became evident as soon as we actually got into planning the specifics this course could offer. After our first training session, I asked them to consider a theme for the coming year and really expected there to be several wanting one thing and some another. To my surprise, at the second meeting when the issue came up, all five said in unison, VISIONS. The futurist, Joel Barker (1990), stated, "Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision is just passing time. Vision with action can change the world" (p. 7).

The team began by using the basics involved in creative problem solving and creative productive thinking to develop curriculum content. The focus of the year lay in an overall emphasis on the creative processes: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration leading to a final product. We worked to include something from each discipline in each of the curriculum vehicles developed or selected. (See Figure 1.) In all aspects, while writing this program, the theme VISIONS was kept firmly in focus.

During the first semester, the projects stressed both small and large group participation. Based on the belief that the world has grown too complicated for its problems to be solved by one person, the

FIGURE 1

Frenship ISD 1990-91
Theme: VISIONS

Content + Process + Product + Learning Experience

The learner will investigate, analyze, and predict the significance of VISIONS that influence the past, present, and future as seen in technology, perceptions, environment, achievements, origins, and in the unknown. The learner will produce audio-visual media, written and verbal communication, dramatic and artistic expressions, and/or scientific experiments that illustrate the VISIONS of the past, present, and future.

UNITS OF STUDY

UNIT ONE
GENERALIZATION: Looking within an individual and at the present world enables one to relate what he sees to the visions of the future.

1. Introduction of Visions theme
2. Time capsule
3. Simulation experience: exploring the physical environment of past and present to determine importance on the future
4. Simulation experience: developing requirements necessary for constructing an ideal society

UNIT TWO
GENERALIZATION: Problem solving prepares for the future.

1. TFPS practice problem #1—High school drop outs
2. TFPS practice problem #2—Ozone
3. TFPS State Bowl Qualifier—Transportation

UNIT THREE
GENERALIZATION: Evaluating the freedoms of America under the current Constitution enables which ones might be enlarged and improved, yet still protect the basic Bill of Rights.

1. Creative problem solving

students were encouraged to work within both small and large groups to achieve the learner objective: investigate, analyze and predict VISIONS of the past, present, and the future. Group activities included bonding sessions to establish an atmosphere of participation. Students saw from the very beginning that our team worked together to create a product. The issues discussed in the film, *Why Man Creates* (1969), posed serious questions about the creative process and how it comes into play for different individuals, and was especially useful for problem solving sessions and for inspiring imaginative thought. The students investigated the steps involved in creative problem solving and recognized by name each step as it was taking place.

From the first day, we wanted to capture the spirit of excitement and discovery we knew to be lying just below the surface in these students. It was most important that they immediately begin to predict and analyze the environment of this class and recognize its unique nature. The introduction of the theme utilized a slide presentation which suggested "VISIONS are designed to be seen, heard, felt, and touched." The slides related to technology, perceptions, environment, achievements, origins, and

2. Group analysis of issues
3. Generate revisions to the Constitution
4. Discussion and debate
5. Arrive at consensus and write a revised Constitution
6. Application to past, present, and future

UNIT FOUR
GENERALIZATION: Friendly math competition sparks interest in mathematical application.

1. Present students with requirements for competition
2. Divide students into small groups
3. Small groups compete

UNIT FIVE
GENERALIZATION: Investigate, analyze, and predict the significance of VISIONS in an individual area of interest.

1. Select an area of interest to investigate
2. Draft proposal of investigation and product
3. Investigate, analyze, and predict
4. Develop individual product
5. Present product

UNIT SIX: SYMPOSIUM

UNIT SEVEN: PLAN NEXT YEAR'S THEME AND CURRICULUM
GENERALIZATION: By selecting a theme and developing a curriculum, students feel a sense of ownership for their program.

1. Brainstorm possible themes
2. Select a theme and write the learning experience statement
3. Write generalization statements
4. Develop matrix objectives
5. Develop curriculum outline

the unknown. Students then worked in teams to create VISIONS they wished to leave to the future. These products were placed into a time capsule. Our ship was now loaded, and we were pulling away from the dock on a definite, charted course.

The team endeavored to help students see the relationships among the disciplines throughout the program. Theme-related interdisciplinary simulations from the Interact Company in Lakeside, California, proved useful and also provided jumping off points for additional activities. Examples were a field trip to a local archaeological dig and art projects depicting perceptions of the past, present, and future.

The area of math required special consideration. Daily math sponges opened class time and provided the opportunity for both individual and cooperative learning. Students individually solved plexars, logic problems, geometry puzzles, and brain teasers. Cooperatively, they shared methods and solutions. A friendly math competition allowed students with varied

FIGURE 2

Frenship ISD 1991-92
Theme: AWAKENINGS

Content + Process + Product + Learning Experience

The learner will substantiate, extrapolate, and hypothesize the significance of awakenings in biological, environmental, artistic, and social factors that influence organisms, systems, and cultures. The learner will produce audio-visual media, written and verbal communication, dramatic and artistic expressions, and/or scientific experiments that illustrate these influences on the awakenings of selected organisms, systems, and cultures.

UNITS OF STUDY

UNIT ONE
GENERALIZATION: The development of different numeration systems is significant to mathematics.
1. Different systems: Egyptian, Babylonian, Roman
2. Other number bases
3. Operations with other bases
4. Field properties of defined systems

UNIT TWO
GENERALIZATION: Origins of life forms relate to the universe.
1. Visit Planetarium
2. Space exploration, researching the planets
3. Create planetary life forms based on research
4. Written explanation and visual art project with presentation

UNIT THREE
GENERALIZATION: Problem solving prepares for the future.
1. TFPS problem #1—Space exploration
2. TFPS problem #2 —Legal epidemic
3. TFPS State Bowl Qualifier—Sports Ethics

math abilities to compete as a team. For example, the senior calculus student assisted the ninth grade algebra student while the tenth grade student shared his understanding of geometry. Activities that stressed concrete sequential thinking were necessary for students to see that VISION often requires order.

Because the main goal of FISD's G/T program is to offer students opportunities for using creative problem solving strategies, we elected to participate in the Texas Future Problem Solving Program (TFPS). TFPS, while not initially popular, offered areas for piggy-backing into other projects. In the first practice problem, "Dropouts," students used an in-school resource and were provided the chance to become familiar with Frenship's innovative program that reaches potential dropouts. Students also participated in a public service announcement competition aimed at keeping kids in school. Eight 30 second video spots were produced. Spinning off from that, the student teams took ideas developed from their TFPS situations and created "Stay In School" posters. The

UNIT FOUR
GENERALIZATION: The adversarial system is significant to the American justice system.
1. Specific historical cases
2. Field trip to view courtroom ethics and process
3. Be the defense or prosecutor in a mock trial

UNIT FIVE
GENERALIZATION: Awaken the knowledge of the influence of lifestyle on AIDS.
1. AIDS awareness research
2. Guest speaker: Hospice
3. Booklet and presentation to intermediate students
4. Decision tree and Channel One

UNIT SIX
GENERALIZATION: Creativity and self-expression can be expanded through the use of design in sculpting.
1. Produce a sculpture and interpret it in writing
2. Field trip to art museum, slide show presentation on significant periods of sculpture, Texas Tech art school

UNIT SEVEN
GENERALIZATION: Creativity influences behavior.
1. Research artists who suffered some form of mental illness and how this influences creativity
2. Describe the relationship between form and expression
3. IQ tests, games to test memory, thinking, and creativity games
4. Substantiate and extrapolate findings in a journal and presentation

UNIT EIGHT
GENERALIZATION: Explore the relationship between form and function.
1. Speaker on architecture
2. Research periods in architecture
3. Design a model building to reflect future environment

UNIT NINE: SYMPOSIUM

UNIT TEN: PLAN NEXT YEAR'S PROGRAM

Texas Future Problem Solving produced many positive results. The students learned to "think quickly" in pressure circumstances. They learned that it is not always the older peer team who does the best job. They learned that working with "best friends" is not always the best situation when the product is on the line. We feel strongly that TFPS offers a positive arena to showcase aspects of this interdisciplinary program.

While the focus of the first semester remained on group participation, the second semester focus lay in the expression of individual VISIONS by each gifted/talented student. We felt that in addition to being capable of working within the group, each student should be encouraged to branch out into her/his own area of interest and investigate, analyze, and predict the significance of her/his own VISION. The genesis of this program channeled students to submerse themselves in a topic where they had a real "need to know." Ken Macrorie (1988) in his book *The I-Search Paper* calls it "an itch that needs to be scratched" (p. 14). Each student used the tools of investigation to become an authority on a particular subject. The areas of independent study came from any of the disciplines the five teachers taught, or hopefully, crossed disciplines. At this point, we became facilitators for the students along this journey of discovery. These projects could also count for more than just the G/T assignment: the student could also earn credit in a content discipline, such as English, history, or science. Requirements called for students to investigate, develop a final product, present their findings in a presentation format, and relate their product to the theme of VISIONS. The goal in this independent study project was to empower students: to give them permission and authority to find out about the things they care about. The maiden voyage had reached its destination, and the boat was still in tact.

We strongly believed that the gifted/talented students needed to feel ownership of their program. Therefore, a time period was placed into the second semester which allowed the students to build the program for the coming year. The students had to construct their own vessel. Again using the creative problem solving process, students selected a theme and developed a curriculum which included previously established parameters. This activity wrapped up the year on a positive note and provided enthusiasm for the new year. The theme for 1991-92 is AWAKENINGS. (See Figure 2.)

The students learned to "think quickly" in pressure circumstances. They learned that it is not always the older peer team who does the best job. They learned that working with "best friends" is not always the best situation when the product is on the line.

When we take on a project, we hope that at least 50% of our ideas stay on board and are not swept away in the language of apathy that can tear the sails with such wind as: be practical, it's too radical, that's not logical, it's against policy, it worries our parents, it won't work here, management will never buy it, or the universal idea killer: Silence. Frenship's experience was different, it worked. The district pulled its high school program out of the content areas in an effort to meet the needs of the gifted/talented students, and has now established it as weighted elective credit. The success of this program stems from risks the team was allowed to take and the support given by the students, parents, faculty, and administration. We are not foolish enough to think we have stumbled upon the panacea for gifted education, but for this school, these teachers and students have created a VISION that is shared by all.

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Awakening the Potential in Gifted Students

Jeb Williamson
11th Grade Student
Frenship Independent School District

The call for educational reform arose in 1899 with philosopher John Dewey's publication of *The School and Society*. Dewey explained that, "Nature wants children to be children before they are men.... Childhood has ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling, peculiar to itself, nothing can be more foolish than to substitute our ways over them." Dewey's insight was highly acclaimed for several years. He inspired American schools to revise and revamp their teaching methods. However, after the first and second World Wars, Dewey's enthusiasm for inspiring children to learn was lost as America began shifting its attention to foreign shores. Until recently, that is where our focus has remained.

Now our beloved quick-panacea American society is once again yearning to set afire the minds of its youth. Americans are tired of hearing reports of how its children are not as smart as the Japanese or the children of Europe. Americans are tired of finding stories about high school graduates who lack the fundamental skills to succeed in life. America now wants its children to develop higher order thinking, to develop capacities of critical analysis and, most of all, to develop skills that will insure students opportunities in life. One of the fastest growing methods of doing this is the development and enhancement of curriculum for gifted youth. I am a member of a very unique Gifted and Talented program at Frenship High School. I, as well as my classmates, feel that the program is unique for three reasons:

1) The interdisciplinary philosophy of the class incorporates all learning methods.
2) The curriculum for the class was designed and still is being designed by the students.
3) The program emphasizes learning critical thinking skills, communication skills, etc. for the sake of learning rather than learning content to make a grade.

To begin, let us examine the need for the cultivation of critical thinking into school programs. Critical thinking, to me, is the process by which a person learns to differentiate his decisions between logical evaluation and impulsive response. Statistics and reports state that the majority of American students lack the ability to think critically. But why? I believe that the fault lies in the traditional teaching method. Students throughout elementary and junior high are shown step-by-step how to do assignments. Students are led by their teachers. This is the acceptable, and widely used, method. But when students enter high school, they are suddenly asked to think for themselves. Most of them simply cannot do it. The age of fifteen is too late to begin the process of teaching students how to think independently. It is time for the educational system to AWAKEN to the inadequacies of

This article was written by Jeb Williamson, one of four gifted students from Frenship Independent School District who co-presented with two of their teachers at the Institute on Developing Critical Thinking in Gifted Students, February 16-18, 1992 in Austin. Response to the student participation was so great that many participants requested printed copies of the students' presentations.

its established methods of teaching. It is time for the accusation of the students as incompetent to stop. That is the conceived law of our G/T program. We, as students, are AWAKENING to our potential as thinkers and as people in an applicably conducive school environment.

Let us now examine the three contingents of my personal philosophy of gifted and talented education. This philosophy is carried out in the habits I develop for myself, and also with my classmates in the construction of *our* program.

The age of fifteen is too late to begin the process of teaching students how to think independently.

First of all, teachers in a gifted and talented program should not teach everything; they should allow students to discover everything. **Within the program, students should discover their abilities.**

- Broad areas of research that use the interdisciplinary approach keep the students from losing interest. Since the class is interdisciplinary, students are not forced to study a topic from a mandated point of view. If the student does not want to examine the subject from a pragmatic angle, the student can try to comprehend it from an artistic base. By allowing this flexibility, the class conforms to the student instead of the student conforming to the class.

- A wide array of activities does not allow students to become bored; they are kept active and challenged. Activities, designed by the students, are always evolving. We call these spin-off activities. As a class, we study certain broad-scale questions. Sometimes, during our research, a certain aspect of the topic intrigues us. We allow ourselves flexibility in the curriculum to spin-off from the main topic and research the smaller facet. By providing this component, we keep discovering ways to learn and interests to investigate. We become enticed to learn, but more importantly, we become enthusiastic about learning.

- More than anything else, students are allowed to discover their creativity. I believe creativity is the crossroad of dexterity, inspiration, and opportunity. The students' discovery of their creativity emanates from the opportunities the program provides, the support of the teachers, and the support among the students.

The second contingent deals with the teaching method used with G/T students. I think that a G/T program should not close the door of teaching to the students, but rather open the gateway to the teaching experience. **The best way to learn is to teach.**

- Students are not shut off from the teaching philosophy. The class should veer away from the often mundane belief in chalkboard notes and lectures. The students should be the primary teachers. We as students are responsible for teaching each other as well as ourselves. We are not limited by one certain pattern of learning. After the objectives are presented by our facilitators, we become the potter that molds the clay. We are allowed to use many different avenues of learning, such as discussion and the comparison of activity versus response.

- Students are not forced to follow the dictates of a particular teacher. Since we have five teachers, we are exposed to a diversity of student/teacher relationships. The teachers guide us and show us methods of teaching ourselves. Students rely on each other to learn. We primarily use the Jigsawing Method. In this method, a group of students (usually 4-5), is given an entire research

packet. The packet is divided up among the students. Each individual student is responsible for investigating everything about his/her component. The students then come together and teach each other what they have learned. Cooperative learning therefore plays a major role in the class. Recognition of individuality is a key in dealing with G/T students. A student's individualism is stressed through his/her role in group activities.

The last contingent is the purpose of education. What benefits do the students get from a Gifted and Talented class? A G/T program should not stay with the student, it should go with the student. The difference is in the verb usage. *Stay* is an idle verb, it does nothing. Knowledge stays. *Go* is an active verb, it denotes action. Education goes. Everything that is acquired from the program goes with the students no matter where they roam. The students do not leave G/T in the classroom. **The students are awakened to new opportunities in life.**

- As students, we contrive analytical skills. Often we do not fully comprehend that we are doing this. I feel that is the best way to learn: Learning without knowing it. Students develop the skills of attacking situations from different angles. We learn to search for the weakest element in a situation, instead of taking a challenge head on, and attack that element. Through the strength we derive in analytical thinking, we discover our own weaknesses. This offers us the opportunity to provide for ourselves. We learn to critique ourselves. The ability to critique oneself is not a birthright, it must be learned. By learning to judge ourselves, we will always have our best critic on our shoulders.

- As students, we develop communication skills. One unique facet of the class's infrastructure is the combination of all four high school grades, 9-12. We have a class "culture." However, the diversity of the class presents a problem. How do we get along with each other? We are left two options: We can either learn to communicate with each other, or we can have a class consisting of several individual factions. We choose to communicate. There is seldom individual work, the emphasis is on group work—cooperative learning as we say. We learn to function together to achieve. We communicate with each other to contribute to each other.

- As students, we also learn reactionary techniques. I feel one of the largest blocks to creativity is the student's initial response to a situation. If the student perceives the activity as a grade, the creativity of that student is blown. A problem with traditional teaching methods is the presentation of assignments. If the purpose of the assignment is presented as obtaining a grade, the result will be a grade response. What we have learned to realize is that our response dictates our outcome. If we respond to an activity as an obstacle, the activity becomes something we must overcome or endure. We do not complete the activity to learn, but rather to finish the activity as quickly as possible. In our program, we learn to view activities as appendages or extensions. We use activities to exemplify our talents and abilities. Activities become tools with which we chisel. By using projects as manipulative devices, we enhance our comprehension

What we have learned to realize is that our response dictates our outcome. If we respond to an activity as an obstacle, the activity becomes something we must overcome or endure. We do not complete the activity to learn, but rather to finish the activity as quickly as possible. In our program, we learn to view activities as appendages or extensions. We use activities to exemplify our talents and abilities.

of our environment. But more importantly, we promote understanding of our individual role in that environment. By reacting this way, we guarantee ourselves better methods of learning, and that is learning because we need and want to learn.

- The last point I want to discuss is how critical thinking skills are developed in our G/T class. Earlier I mentioned analytical thinking. The difference between the two is this: Analytical thinking is the evaluation and assessment of situations. Critical thinking is the application of everything we know to render decisions. Critical thinking opportunities arise in the classroom because there is always something happening. Students are continually barraged with activities that not only require tactical mastery, but emphasize rational logic. The class establishes what I feel are four dimensions of critical thinking:

1) The evaluation of something at its face value.
2) The evaluation of emotional integration.
3) The evaluation of pragmatic and rational response.
4) Construction of decisions through cause and effect relationships.

In conclusion, education has two purposes:

1) Education must get the students through school.
2) Education must get the students through life.

Often students do not realize the double meaning. It is the job of teachers to make sure that students understand which one is more important.

Organizing Dual Enrollment Options for Gifted Education

Sandra R. Gifford
Paris Independent School District
Paris, Texas

This is a challenging but exciting time for gifted education as educators strive to develop programs for gifted students that will stimulate their intellectual growth, their desire to achieve, and that will provide opportunities for self understanding and self-directed learning. To meet these goals at the secondary level, schools may choose from such vehicles as mentorship programs, honors classes in specific subject matter, advanced placement courses, independent studies, early college admission, and college courses in high school. Meeting the diverse needs and talents of the gifted population should be the determining factor in program selection.

In choosing appropriate instruction for the gifted secondary student, the Paris Independent School District (PISD) opted for a dual enrollment vehicle for high school seniors—College English for High School Credit. Dual credit, as the students dubbed it, combines the curriculum of English IV Academic Honors with that of Freshman English at Paris Junior College (PJC). One of our goals is to expose our gifted youth "to advanced content and conceptual levels not ordinarily addressed in regular classes" (Feldhusen, 1990). Another multi-faceted goal is to encourage creativity, the production of new ideas and products, and the integration of multiple disciplines around a broad-based theme—all principles of a differentiated curriculum as specified by Sandra Kaplan (1979). This dual enrollment course in English allows for in-depth learning plus creativity without falling into the "more is better" trap (the more work assigned equals better learning).

The PJC Counseling Department and the Communications Division work closely with Paris High School faculty in implementation of the course. To be eligible, high school students meet PJC entrance requirements of a grade equivalency of 13 on the Nelson Denny Test, plus qualify on the high school matrix composed of a cognitive skills test; the California Achievement Test; grades; the Renzulli-Hartman Scales for Creativity, Motivation, and Learning; and the SOI Creativity Test. Both identified gifted and accelerated pupils are accepted into the course using cluster grouping to ensure that learning style needs will be met. The students officially enroll in college, pay fees, and purchase the required texts. Any qualified student may take the course without enrolling for college credit; however, only 6 students in 5 years have chosen this route because one of the benefits is that credit for 2 semesters of Freshman English and English IV Academic Honors can be obtained by fulfilling the requirements of one class that meets for 60 minutes 5 times a week.

Credit for two semesters of college Freshman English and English IV Academic Honors can be obtained by fulfilling the requirements of one class.

Once student eligibility is established, teacher selection is necessary. The best secondary teachers of the gifted, according to John Feldhusen (1990) of Purdue University, are as follows:

> those who know their discipline or subject matter extremely well; who can focus instruction primarily on concepts, issues, problems, relationships among ideas; who can interact with gifted students at a level and pace appropriate to the students' precocity; and who have developed special understanding of the characteristics and needs of the gifted (p. 6) .

In addition, the teacher must meet the faculty qualifications of the accrediting institution. In most cases, as it is at PJC, faculty must hold at least a master's degree in their field of study. Since several PISD faculty meet this criteria for PJC employment and have also received training in gifted education, teachers are selected from a high school pool. Information obtained from other schools conducting dual credit programs also indicates a higher degree of success when the course is taught by high school teachers.

The next and most time-consuming task of organizing a dual enrollment program is establishing curriculum. As Socrates so aptly stated, "If a man does not know to what port he is sailing, no wind is favorable." Two premises guide curriculum development for dual enrollments in PISD:

1. Instruction must be based upon the principles of a differentiated curriculum as outlined by Kaplan (1979) and shown in Figure 1.

2. Instruction must combine the elements of both English IV Academic Honors and College English. In other words, the high school honors curriculum is not sacrificed to that of the college; nor is there unnecessary duplication of assignments, such as requiring two personal narratives instead of one more in-depth personal narrative. Remember that more of the same is not better.

FIGURE 1

- Present content that is related to broad-based issues, themes, or problems.
- Integrate multiple disciplines into the area of study.
- Present comprehensive, related, and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study.
- Develop independent or self-directed study skills.
- Develop productive, complex, abstract, and/or higher level thinking skills.
- Focus on open-ended tasks.
- Develop research skills and methods.
- Integrate basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum.
- Encourage the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce "new" ideas.
- Encourage the development of products that use new techniques, materials, and forms.
- Encourage the development of self-understanding, i.e. recognizing and using one's abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences between oneself and others.
- Evaluate student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion referenced, and/or standardized instruments (p. 5).

To mesh critical/creative/productive thinking and research/study skills, a curriculum development format is used. An overall theme is supported by a generalization outlining the key terms (topics) that are sufficiently broad to encompass broad interdisciplinary learning experiences. The theme and generalization are repeated for each topic. In PISD's dual credit program, there are five topics or units of study: Conflict of Wills, Choice and Consequence, Foibles, Critics of Society, and Know Thyself. These units identify essential elements, prerequisite knowledge/skills, and materials necessary to provide a learning experience that, in turn, emphasizes content, process, and product. Each of these units is comprised of learning activities which result in products that fulfill both high

FIGURE 2

Paris Independent School District
FORMAT FOR G/T CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

THEME:

GENERALIZATION: *(supports theme; the big idea; broad statement of intent; inclusive; the big umbrella; states cause-effect relationship; broad enough to allow for interdisciplinary learning experiences; built from key words—kinds, functions, purpose, needs, value, consequences, conditions)*

TOPIC:

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: *Ex.*—TLW differentiate fact from opinion about the influence of explorations on environment, media, and cultures, take notes from varied resources, and use notes to debate.

[TS+C+RS+BS+P]
(Thinking Skill + Interdisciplinary Content with key words + Research Skill + Basic Skill + Product)

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS: *(task analysis of content or skills)*

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS/CAC* ENABLING OBJECTIVES (EO):

- *EE Descriptor (EE) (CAC EO Code(s))*

or

- *CAC Descriptor (CAC EO Code)*

MATERIALS: *(for whole unit)*

LEARNING ACTIVITIES: *(be specific; include affective domain)*

#	Content/EE's *(interdisciplinary; what to know; key words)*	Process *(critical, creative, research/ study skills; what to do; verbs)*	Product *(verbal, written, kinesthetic, graphic; means of communication; nouns)*

STUDENT PRODUCT EVALUATION:

*Curriculum Assessment Cooperative

school and College English requirements (See Figures 2 and 3).

Once the teacher knows the port to which he is sailing, the curriculum can assume a life of its own as students modify and adapt its requirements to enhance their abilities, to expand upon their interests, and to meet their unique needs. Curriculum development is an on-going process in PISD, and this is especially true with dual enrollment programs that must adapt curriculum to correspond to the more frequent textbook changes that occur in colleges.

A general syllabus delineates the literature, compositions, vocabulary, and textbook selections for the semester. This syllabus also specifies grade determination; for PISD it is one-fourth daily, one-half

FIGURE 3

Paris Independent School District
FORMAT FOR G/T CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

THEME: The Human Condition

GENERALIZATION: The diversity and complexity of the human condition are reflected in the examination of the conflicts, choices, and foibles of society and self.

TOPIC: Choice and Consequence

LEARNING EXPERIENCE: From British and Western sources, analyze the choices of literary and historical figures in a debate which evaluates the influence of societal factors and individual responsibility on decision-making.

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS: Debate and research formats

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS/CAC ENABLING OBJECTIVES (EO):

MATERIALS: Macbeth, A Man for All Seasons, All the President's Men, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, The Bear, Rottenberg's The Elements of Argument, selected short stories from literature text

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

#	Content/Essential Element(s)	Process	Product
	The individual is ultimately responsible for his choices even though his choices are influenced by others and even though the consequences often affect others.	1. Interview Macbeth and Sir Thomas More.	1. Simulated Nightline broadcast with Ted Koppel and distinguished panelists
		2. Compare and categorize choices of Macbeth, More, McMurphy, and Richard Nixon.	2. Chart
		3. Show deterioration of Macbeth from admired hero to despised villain.	3. Written composition

STUDENT PRODUCT EVALUATION:

compositions and major tests, and one-fourth exam. Grading standards are clearly explained to maintain the integrity of both the high school and the college scores. A weighted grading system encourages accelerated and gifted students to take the more challenging secondary courses like English IV Academic Honors. For example, an 87 is an A on the high school scale, but to ensure the integrity of the college score, a high numerical average is necessary for an A in College English. An additional day-by-day syllabus is given to the students for each six weeks' period. This encourages student time management and eliminates absentees asking the inevitable, "What did I miss?"

Dual credit is a course that works well in the PISD Gifted Education Program. It is fast paced, but at the same time allows for student-directed learning. It has structure but also open-ended tasks; it encourages the integration of creativity with interdisciplinary tasks, but it also stresses basic as well as higher level thinking skills. The success of the initial dual enrollment in English has resulted in similar courses in trigonometry, analytic geometry, and physics.

How do students evaluate the dual enrollment option? Here are a few of their assessments. "It maintains many of the characteristics of honors courses, but the addition of the college text adds variety and intensity." "It is a good balance of high school rules and structure and college freedom and high level discussions." And last is the response that, "Dual credit provides a good relaxed environment for learning."

There is perhaps no better accolade for secondary gifted education than that it "provides a good relaxed environment for learning," and, it is Feldhusen (1990) who reminds educators that "in essence, educational acceleration is not acceleration; it is simply providing instruction at a level and pace which fits students' ability and talents" (p. 6).

References

Feldhusen, John. (1990). What Is Appropriate Instruction for the Gifted at the Secondary Level? *Tempo*, 10, 6-8.

Kaplan, Sandra N. (1979). *Inservice Training Manual: Activities for Developing Curriculum for the Gifted/Talented.* California: Office of the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools.

Q & A High School Programming

Evelyn Levsky Hiatt &
Jeanette Covington
Division of Gifted/Talented Education
Texas Education Agency

Grading is a big problem with high school students in programs for the gifted. What do you suggest?

Although there is no official agency policy related to grading, there are some recommended practices. In many cases, high schools have both honors and gifted classes. Weighting honors classes has become a fairly standard practice, and some districts add additional weight for classes designed to meet the needs of gifted students. This, then, pits students in honors classes against students in classes for gifted students. It is **not** recommended that classes for gifted students be given additional weight over honors classes. Services for gifted students are designed to meet the educational needs of certain students. It should not be more work, but more appropriate work. Classes designated as honors classes should be just as challenging as those for gifted students; however, they will be tailored to meet different student needs.

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What is the real difference between honors and gifted classes?

Traditionally, honors classes tend to be far more teacher directed than classes for gifted students. There are many students who can do very well in advanced or honors classes as long as the teacher provides the structure and the direction for the class. At the same time, often gifted students in those classes are saying, "Do I have to do it that way? I would like to do...." In classes for gifted students, there tends to be a wider array of readings and more independent study projects that lead to sophisticated audience-focused products. Student-to-student directed class discussions, rather than teacher-led lectures and/or discussions, are much more common. Another difference in some classes for the gifted, as reflected in two of the articles in this issue, is that students may write their own curriculum for their course of study.

It is important to remember, however, that there is no regulation that states there must be separate classes. Gifted students may be served within an honors class; however, differentiation within the class to accommodate the needs of the learner should occur.

What other options do I have at the secondary level for serving students?

Some districts modify current instruction in existing courses, including honors, Advanced Placement, and International Bac-

calaureate classes. Others turn to local community colleges and universities to collaborate on the development of classes that include both essential elements and college requirements. This option has the advantage of providing some college credit for students. Some districts are taking more innovative approaches and developing new courses that are interdisciplinary in nature. Some times these courses are multi-grade groupings, such as the one at Frenship Independent School District described in this issue. Others are offering their students mentoring possibilities, in which the students work with professionals in fields that are of interest to them. Many smaller districts are members of cooperatives that provide high school seminar programs on a monthly basis.

Regardless of the option offered, it is important to check State Board of Education rules included in Chapter 75 of the Texas Administrative Code. For example, most interdisciplinary courses are going to need approval as experimental courses. Rules related to concurrent enrollment also are a part of Chapter 75.

I'm in a small district and only have four students identified at the high school level. What are the high school seminar programs mentioned above?

Several of the regional education service centers sponsor the high school seminars for districts that wish to join. While all of them operate in a slightly different manner, they generally follow the same pattern. Topics are generated either by the students themselves or by program teachers. A schedule is prepared that includes speakers with expertise in the specific area being covered. Participating districts will have a teacher of record who is responsible for providing students with reading lists and assignments throughout the month in preparation for a monthly seminar meeting. These meetings may be held at the regional education service center or, as examples, at the local hospital when the topic covers medical research, the local university when the topic focuses on anthropology, or the judges chambers when students are investigating the legal system. Coordinators of the seminars stress the importance of having students develop products related to the seminar sessions. While there may be only four students at different grades in one school district, the seminar offers the students the opportunity to interact with as many as one hundred of their colleagues from other districts.

Gifted students may be served within an honors class; however, differentiation within the class to accommodate the needs of the learner should occur.

Should you be interested in a high school seminar cooperative, you might wish to contact your service center to see if one is already in operation or if one is going to be started. Also, in some cases the seminars have been so successful at the high school level, regional service centers are offering the seminars to students in middle and elementary schools.

I don't know if the students would be interested in participating in the seminars if they count as an absence from school. Would I need a waiver?

No. Because the seminars are part of the student's curricular program, they do not count as an absence. The same would be true about mentorships, which also would be considered an integral part of the student's academic program and not a co-curricular or extracurricular activity. Clarification of this situation is in Vol. 1, No 4 (1991) issue of *Update on Gifted Education.*

Do mentors or college teachers need to meet the 30 hour training requirement?

Technically, all teachers who have responsibility for teaching in the program for gifted students must have the 30 hours of training related to gifted education. In most cases, mentors are not the teachers of record and do not need the staff development. However, in order to be a successful mentor, some training will be necessary. The same is true for university personnel; if they are not the teacher of record, they are not required to receive the training. If, as in the case explained in the article by Sandra Gifford that appears in this issue of the *Update*, the class is designed to meet the learning needs of high school students and will contain only high school students, some training should be required by the district to assure that the instructor is knowledgeable about the characteristics and learning needs of adolescent gifted students.

Sometimes we have gifted students at the high school level who are extremely busy with involvement in extracurricular activities and several advanced level courses. They simply do not feel they have time to devote to the program for gifted students. Must they be exited from the program if they do not participate?

The selection committee may furlough a student for a semester, year, or any designated period of time, if it is in the best interest of the student. It would not be necessary to exit the student.

No. Many districts have established furlough policies to assist in meeting needs of students. The selection committee may furlough a student for a semester, year, or any designated period of time, if it is in the best interest of the student. It would not be necessary to exit the student. Students might be furloughed for the reasons described above or a variety of others, such as, lengthy illnesses, traumatic events in the life of a student, etc. A sample furlough form may be obtained from the Division of Gifted/Talented Education.

If students are furloughed, do we still count them on PEIMS and do we receive funding for them?

No. Students must be served in order to count on PEIMS and receive funding.

Students in our elementary school are identified in general intellectual ability and served in a pull-out program. When they get to middle school and high school, our program is specific subject matter aptitude. I understand there is a rule that says we cannot reidentify them for our program? Why can we not do that?

The rule you refer to is in 19 TAC 89.51(e) and it states, "Once identified for a gifted program, the students shall not be reidentified in order to remain in the program. A student may be removed from the program by complying with local board approved exiting procedures." The situation you describe is not at all unusual. Actually, it can work quite well to identify students in general intellectual ability (GIA) at elementary and then move into a more specialized area of specific subject matter aptitude at the secondary level. Students who are identified in GIA should be successful in one or more specific subject matter aptitude classes for gifted students. Certainly you should evaluate which classes will be the most appropriate and counsel with the students. However, this does not mean they need to be reidentified.

PARENTING GIFTED CHILDREN: AN EXCELLENT ADVENTURE

TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED
and
TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
CO-SPONSOR
THE SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR PARENTS OF G/T

JUNE 6, 1992

STOUFFER AUSTIN HOTEL, AUSTIN, TEXAS

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

7:30 a.m.	Registration
8:30	Dialogue With Lionel "Skip" Meno, Commissioner of Education
9:30	Break
10:00	Concurrent Sessions
11:00	Concurrent Sessions
12:00 p.m.	Luncheon with Guest Speaker, **Jim Delisle** Author and Assoc. Professor of Special Education, Kent State University *Giftedness From the Inside Out: Learning from the Children*
1:45	Concurrent Sessions
2:45	Concurrent Sessions
3:30	Break
4:00	Closing Panel Discussion

BREAK OUT SESSION TOPICS

TEA Made Me Do It
Odyssey of the Mind
Special Needs of Spanish-speaking G/T Student
Summer Programs for Gifted Students
Starting a Parent Support Group
Advocacy: Parents, Educators, Friends of Gifted
What Should a G/T Program Look Like ?
Psychosocial Needs of the Gifted Child

REGISTRATION FEE $25, includes lunch
Overnight Accommodations at the **Stouffer Austin Hotel** are available at $79.
For reservations, contact the Stouffer directly at 512/343-2626

Mail conference registration form and check payable to TAGT no later than May 18 to:
TAGT, 406 E.11th Street, Suite 310, Austin, TX 78701-2617
Cut-off for registrations will be determined by space available.

PARENTING GIFTED CHILDREN: AN EXCELLENT ADVENTURE
JUNE 6, 1992, STOUFFER AUSTIN HOTEL

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A GIFTED GLOBE

10TH WORLD CONGRESS ON GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

TORONTO • AUGUST 8 - 14, 1993

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This world gathering of educators, policy makers, parents and youth will set future directions in the development of human potential as well as the globe itself.

You are invited to contribute by presenting your work, experience or opinion.

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The following formats will be used:

- A SINGLE PAPER session is a 30 minute presentation.
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- A ROUND TABLE session offers the opportunity to share specific ideas, practices, and/or research on related aspects. Assigned leaders will facilitate the group discussion. This is a format favoured by the World Council for international collaboration.
- A POSTER session is an informal presentation and discussion featuring the use of graphic or other multimedia material demonstrating research process, curriculum outcomes, etc.
- A HALF-DAY WORKSHOP provides in-depth exploration or presentation of related theoretical and/or practical frameworks. You may request to organize or participate in such a format.

DEADLINES

Submission – June 30, 1992
for all presentations that may require budgetary planning, academic support or specific invitations (please specify)

Submission – December 1, 1992
all remaining presentations

(see overleaf)

10th World Congress on Gifted & Talented Education

Toronto • August 8 - 14, 1993

COVER SHEET FOR PROPOSED PRESENTATION

1. Presenting Author: (please write name as you would like it to appear in the programme)

   _____

2. Institution/Affiliation: _____

3. Mailing Address: _____

   _____

   _____ Postal Code: _____

4. Co-Presenter(s) (name, affiliation): _____

   _____

   _____

5. Title: _____

   _____

6. Description: (Please enclose an abstract for the printed programme, 75 word limit.)

7. Preferred type of session: ☐ Single ☐ Multiple ☐ Symposium/Panel ☐ Round Table ☐ Poster ☐ Half-Day Workshop

8. Target Audience: (indicate all appropriate levels)

   (a) ☐ General ☐ Specific e.g. Research, Technology

   (b) Education: ☐ Elementary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary ☐ Consultants ☐ Researchers ☐ Administrators ☐ Parents

   (c) Other: _____

   (d) Audience Experience in Gifted Education: Introductory 1 2 3 4 5 Expert

9. Keyword(s) classifying your session: e.g. Mathematics/Creativity/Global Education/Gender Differences/Curriculum _____

   _____

10. Language of Presentation: ☐ English ☐ French

11. Audio visual requirements: ☐ Overhead ☐ Video ☐ Slide ☐ Other: _____

Please enclose the following:

35

1 copy of the Cover Sheet
1 copy of your Presentation Description for the printed programme (75 word limit)
1 copy of your Presentation Summary for programme organizing committee (2 page maximum)

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